

But its preventive influence is beyond comparison more intrinsically valuable than its reclaiming power.

Nothing is more clear than that the habit of drunkenness is reached by slow and insidious steps; that all men have been at one time exceedingly moderate in their use of the ensnaring drink; that by very gradual processes their attachment has been formed. The liking once acquired, the fetters of intemperance are soon fixed and fastened. In this way not only have well-educated and respectfully-trained persons become the victims of drunkenness, but even religious professors, officers of Christian churches, and not a few distinguished ministers of the gospel, have been slain in their high places by this fearful destroyer.

Experience has demonstrated that it is somewhat hazardous to use these drinks at almost any time, or for almost any purpose.

There is not a Christian denomination in the world that has not been wounded and made to mourn over such catastrophes as we have now referred to; and, BRETHREN, WE ALL KNOW IT! How then should we be concerned for our own personal honour and security, to enlist in a cause which at once removes every temptation, at least to THIS one great and prevailing sin.

It is for you (if there be any self-denial in abandoning that which physiology, chemistry, and experience, have proved to be positively pernicious to the human system) to put intoxicating liquor from you, and show forth the high-toned principle which distinguished the herald of the Saviour, and which is the very essence of the noble and generous resolution of the Apostle Paul, who said that if eating flesh or drinking wine would cause a brother to offend, he would do neither so long as the world stood.

The leading vice of our nation is drunkenness. The great snare of the moral and good is drinking; and to stay the ruin of the one, and to save from danger the other, is worthy of the greatest sacrifice that man or angel could make.

The luxury of benefitting the drunkard and his miserable family, even in the things of this life, ought to be infinitely sweeter than any enjoyment that the gratifications connected with wine or strong drink could afford. But with the importance also of conferring moral advantage on so many thousands of our fellow-creatures,—and with the experience that the Total Abstinence principle has greatly supplied sabbath-schools with children, and places of worship with hearers, and churches with members, and heaven itself with redeemed spirits,—surely no selfish nor worldly consideration should make us *even lukewarm* in a cause that is distinguished by moral excellence, benevolence, and mercy.

Christian Ministers who love the Lord Jesus, and feel truly solicitous to save immortal souls, will be willing even to forego the use of lawful things, rather than that through their meats and drinks those should perish for whom Christ died.

I have heard ministers object to the harsh and intemperate spirit which the advocates of the total abstinence cause have at times displayed, especially towards

religious persons who did not unite with them. Doubtless much of human weakness, error, and passion, have been mixed up with the good Temperance cause. But is not such a remark equally applicable to religion itself? How much has Christianity suffered by the inconsistent profession of bad men, and the foolish and often absurd dogmas of its professed teachers! Yet who rejects the Gospel because many of its teachers may have been either ignorant or wicked? The bad way in which the good cause of Temperance is often treated, is the greatest reproach to those who might have treated it better.

We do not, however, in these few remarks, plead for any Temperance Society, but for the principle itself; and we leave our brethren to carry that principle out in the wisest and best way they can. Doubtless the time has now arrived when we should aim at forming Congregational Total Abstinence Societies, so that the children in our schools, and the persons in our own places of worship, might unite with one another in opposing the drinking customs of society, and associating together for the furtherance of the temperance cause.

But the greatest of all considerations are these: we have hundreds of thousands of drunkards around us. They are passing in fearful crowds to an early grave and an awful eternity. From the ranks of the moderate the vacancies are more than made up, and hence the crowds of ruined inebriates hastening to the yawning gulf of destruction, are not in any way lessened. The great mass of them are beyond the reach of the usual means of religious instruction; left to themselves, their ruin is inevitable. Total abstinence holds out a safe and practicable remedy, which God has blessed to the recovery of thousands.

To you, then, beloved brethren, we appeal. We affectionately and yet loudly call you to this station of duty—to this work of self-denial and mercy. Do, not, without carefully weighing the whole matter, dismiss our appeal. Do not, except with the impression of myriads of lost drunkards before you, refuse our request. Do not, except upon your knees, decide as to the course you will adopt. We ask your assent to no particular teetotal creed, nor your influence to any pre-described line of action; but we ask you to abstain from the use of all intoxicating drinks—to exhibit your decided and resolute pledged adherence to the cause—to use your efforts in your spheres of influence, according to your judgment and conscientious conviction, to banish them from the community and from the world at large.

SELF-IMPOSED BURDENS.

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There is something very appalling in the thought, that Britain expends, every year, fifty millions of money on intoxicating drink. We often complain of our high taxation, and we often grow nervous at the thought of our enormous national debt. But here is a tax for which we cannot blame our rulers—a tax self-imposed and self-levied—a tax for which we can only blame ourselves—a tax which would pay the interest of our nation-